EXHIBIT 1

CERTIFIED MAIL

7011 1570 0002 3791 5241

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-2_ filed 11/02/16 PageID.9 Page 2 of 40

NEOPOST FIRST-CLASS MAIL 10/06/2016 US POSTAGE \$008.200

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CUMMINGS MCCLOREY

CMDA

DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

33900 SCHOOLCRAFT LIVONIA, MI 48150-1392

> Pepsico, Inc. c/o The Corporation Company 30600 Telegraph Rd., Suite 2345 Bingham Farms, MI 48025

00342357-1



ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

33900 SCHOOLCRAFT ROAD LIVONIA, MICHIGAN 48150 PHONE: (734) 261-2400 FACSIMILE: (734) 261-4510

James R. Acho jacho@cmda-law.com

October 5, 2016

The Corporation Company, Resident Agent 30600 Telegraph Rd., Suite 2345 Bingham Farms, MI 48025 Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested

Re: Joe C. Thomas v Pepsico, Inc., Pepsi Cola Bottling Company, and Pepsi Beverages Company / Case No. 16-012519-CD

Dear Sir/Madam:

In connection with the above-referenced lawsuit, enclosed you will find a Summons and Complaint in which you have 28 days to file an answer or to take other lawful action.

Thank you for your immediate attention.

Sincerely,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

James R. Acho

JRA/brj Encl

Certified Mail #70111570000237915241

STATE OF MICHIGAN THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT WAYNE COUNTY

SUMMONS AND COMPLAINT

CASE NO. 16-012519-CD Hon, Patricia Perez Fresard

WAINE COUNTY		•		DOU. PRITICIA PETEZ	FIESAIU
Woodward Ave., Detroit MI 48226			· ·	Court Telephor	ne No. 313-224-517
Plaintiff].	Defendant		
homas, Joe C		v	PEPSICO, INC., aka I	PEPSI	
laintiff's Attorney James R. Acho (P 62175) 33900 Schoolcraft ivonia, MI 48150 (734) 261-2400)		Defendant's Attorney	,	
UMMONS NOTICE TO THE You are being sued. YOU HAVE 21 DAYS after receisor take other lawful action with the Universe of take other takes ot	ving this summons to file a the court (28 days if you we	written answer were served by mail	ith the court and serve a coor you were served outside	opy on the other party this state). (MCR 2.111[
Issued 9/30/2016	This summons expires 12/30/2016		ourt clerk ile & Serve Tyler		_
There is no other pending or resolve members of the parties. An action within the jurisdiction of been previously filed in	f the family division of the c	circuit court involv	ing the family or family m	embers of the parties has	amily
he action remains	is no longerpendi	ng. The docket nu	mber and the judge assigne	ed to the action are:	
Docket no.	Judge				Bar no.
An civil action between these part been previously filed in remains	ies or other parties arising o	ut of the transaction		the complaint has Court.	
Docket no.	Judge				Bar no.
VENUE	1				
Plaintiff(s) residence (include city,			fendant(s) residence (inclu		
City of Detroit, Cour		bigan Ci	ty of Detroit, C	ounty of Wayne,	<u>Michigan</u>
Place where action arose or busines				•	
City of Detroit, Cou	nty of Wayne, Mic	bigan	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	· .	
	1				TOICIAL

September 30, 2016

Date .

Signature of attorney/plaintiff

If you require special accommodations to use the court because of a disability or if you require a foreign language interpreter to help you fully participate in court proceedings, please contact the court immediately to make arrangements.



STATE OF MICHIGAN THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT WAYNE COUNTY

PROOF OF SERVICE

CASE NO. 16-012519-CD

TO PROCESS SERVER: You are to serve the summons and complaint not later than 91 days from the date of filing or the date of expiration on the order for second summons: You must make and file your return with the court clerk. If you are unable to complete service you must return this original and all copies to the court clerk.

		CERTIFICATE	AFFIDAVIT OF	SERVICE / NONSERVICE		
I certify that I am a si court officer, or attor		bailiff, appointed	OR	Being first duly swom, I sadult who is not a party o		ally competent
I served persons	ally a copy of the sum	mons and complain	nt,	·····		
I served by regine together with	stered or certified ma	il (copy of return re	ceipt attached) a co	opy of the summons and com	plaint,	
	List all documents serv	ed with the Summons	and Complaint			
					·- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	on the defendant(s):
Defendant's name		Complete addre	ss(es) of service			Day, date, time
	ly attempted to serve le to complete servic		complaint, together	with any attachments, on the	following defenda	nt(s) and
Defendant's name		Complete addre	ess(es) of service		:	Day, date, time
				· ·		
·					·. ·	
I declare that the sta	itements above are tri	ie to the best of me	information, know	rledge and belief.		
Service fee \$	Miles traveled \$	Mileage fee \$	Total fee \$	Signature	· · · ·	
		7		Name (type or pr	int)	
Subscribed and sw	orn to before me on		· .	Title Co	ounty, Michigan.	
My commission ex	pires:	Date Sign	nature:		• • •	
Notary public, Stat	Date te of Michigan, Count	y of	Deputy cour	t clerk/Notary public		
	:		WLEDGMENT			
I acknowledge that	t I have received serv	ice of the summons		gether with		
· :			on Day, date, t	ime	<u> </u>	<u>·</u>
			on behalf of	· :		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Signature						

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS,

Plaintiff

Case No. HON.

CD 16-012519-CD

PEPSICO, INC., aka PEPSI, PEPSI COLA BOTTLING COMPANY, and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY.

FILED IN MY OFFICE WAYNE COUNTY CLERK 9/30/2016 12:58:45 PM CATHY M. GARRETT

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C. By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
Attorneys for Plaintiff
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia, MI 48150
(734) 261-2400

There is no civil action between these parties arising out of the same transaction or occurrences alleged in this Complaint pending in this Court, nor has any such action been assigned to a Judge.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, specifically by JAMES R. ACHO, and

hereby complains against the Defendants, stating more fully as follows:

PARTIES, VENUE AND JURISDICTION

1. Plaintiff, Joe C. Thomas, is an individual residing in the City of Detroit,

County of Wayne, State of Michigan.

- 2. Defendant, Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi"), is an international bottling conglomerate, with offices and plants in the State of Michigan, specifically in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 3. That all transactions or occurrences herein occurred in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 4. Defendant Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi") Is an employer within the meaning of the Michigan Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act (MPWDA), MCL 37.1101 and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), 29 CFP.1630-1641, and the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 29 USC §2601.
 - 5. That the amount in controversy exceeds \$25,000.00.
 - 6. That venue and jurisdiction are otherwise proper in this Court.

COMMON ALLEGATIONS

- 7. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 6 above, as though fully re-written herein.
 - 8. Defendant first employed Plaintiff on February 10, 2015.
- 9. Prior to his employment with Defendant Pepsi, Plaintiff Thomas spent several years in the tool and die industry, where he developed a good reputation for having a strong work ethic.
- 10. Plaintiff was hired on February 10, 2015 as a "Batcher" at \$18.22 an hour plus comprehensive medical benefits.
- 11. Plaintiff Thomas did not receive a 30, 60 or 90 day review and did not receive a written annual personnel review for 2015.

- 12. Plaintiff did, however, receive verbal reviews, and was repeatedly told he was "doing a great job" by his supervisors, specifically Senior Batcher Kevin Gilhooly and Quality Control Supervisor Frank Toprowski.
- 13. That in the fall of 2015, Defendant Pepsi implemented a new batch verification system or policy.
- 14. The new batch verification policy was flawed and would lead to batcher errors.
- 15. Plaintiff Thomas, a quiet and non-confrontational individual, initially sald nothing to his supervisors, even though it was clear to everyone that the batch verification system was faulty.
 - 16. On October 22, 2015, Plaintiff was written up for an error in batching.
- 17. On January 29, 2016, Plaintiff received a second write-up for a similar error.
- 18. On March 7, 2016, Plaintiff Thomas received a third write-up, for yet again another batching error.
- 19. All three write-ups Plaintiff received were illegitimate in the eyes of Plaintiff
 Thomas and his colleagues, because the errors were not due to the performance of
 Plaintiff Thomas, but because the batch verification system itself was flawed.
 - 20. As a result, Plaintiff Thomas refused to sign all three of the write-ups.
- 21. As a result of the stress placed upon him by having to deal with a faulty batch verification system as a batcher, Plaintiff Thomas began to suffer health challenges.

- Plaintiff Thomas suffered a nervous breakdown in May, 2016, and was taken by ambulance to the hospital.
- 23. Plaintiff Thomas was diagnosed with anxiety disorder and his physician placed Plaintiff on leave.
- 24. Plaintiff immediately filed the necessary paperwork for FMLA and short term disability leave (STD).
- 25. Plaintiff was determined to "have a determinable physical or mental characteristic" described by the ADA and MPWDA, specifically by MCL 37.1103(d), in that Plaintiff has a disability as defined by that section, and the Defendant employer was made aware of this.
- 26. After Plaintiff Thomas' third write-up, Plaintiff Thomas emailed Production Manager Rachael Green and complained about the verification policy and that Plaintiff felt he was being harassed by Supervisor Marvin Hendricks.
- 27. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas called the Pepsi employee hotline because after multiple calls to the Human Resources Department and not receiving a return call, Plaintiff Thomas knew of no other way to complain of not just the faulty batch verification system, but the abusive treatment he was receiving.
- 28. It was clear that Pepsi received Plaintiff Thomas' complaints, because Supervisor Frank Toprowski contacted Plaintiff Thomas and assured him the batch verification system was going to be tweaked, and that Plaintiff Thomas would have no future issues with his employment, and that Defendant Pepsi expected Plaintiff Thomas to remain in an employee for many years to come.

- 29. Plaintiff Thomas was never late and never tardy and was always reliable as an employee. On days where he would take a personal day, he followed all appropriate protocol. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas always got along with fellow employees, and was well liked for his cheerful demeanor and consistent work ethic.
- 30. Plaintiff Thomas returned from his STD and FMLA leave on or about August 1, 2016. On the day Plaintiff Thomas returned, Plaintiff went through the morning shift huddle and all of Plaintiff's co-workers welcomed him back and indicated they were happy to see him.
 - 31. After an hour, Plaintiff Thomas was pulled out of his shift and terminated.
- 32. Plaintiff was told he was being terminated for a fourth write-up, for something that had happened months prior.
- 33. This was transparent and vindictive in nature, and Defendant's motives were quite clear: Defendant terminated Plaintiff in retaliation for taking FMLA and STD as well as complaining to management about the faulty batch verification system.
- 34. That Defendant's termination of Plaintiff was unlawful and constitutes disability discrimination and retaliation.
- 35. That as a result of Defendant's unlawful acts, Plaintiff Thomas has suffered economic damages including lost wages, back pay, future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further Plaintiff was forced to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay and all other fringe benefits. Plaintiff has also suffered non-economic damages, including mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

COUNT I

<u>DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF</u> <u>THE MICHIGAN PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CIVIL RIGHTS ACT</u>

- 36. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 35 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 37. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further, Plaintiff was protected by the ADA, and MPWDA.
- 38. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2016.
- 39. The MPWDA and ADA provide that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 40. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by the MPWDA.
- 41. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.
- 42. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant

had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2016.

- 43. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant representatives.
- 44. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 45. That Defendant's actions against the Plaintiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff likewise seeks recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

COUNT II

DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF THE FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

- 46. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 45 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 47. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further, Plaintiff was protected by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 48. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 49. The FMLA provides that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 50. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 51. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.

- 52. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 53. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant's representatives.
- 54. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 55. That Defendant's actions against the Plaintiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff likewise seeks

recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

VERIFIED STATEMENT:

I verify that all the allegations in this Complaint are true to the best of my recollection.

JOE C. THOMAS

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS,

Plaintiff

Case No. HON.

CD

PEPSICO, INC., and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY,

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C. By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
Attorneys for Plaintiff
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia, MI 48150
(734) 261-2400

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C., by JAMES R. ACHO, and demands a jury trial in the above-entitled action.

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS,

Plaintiff

Case No., HON. 16-012519-CD

PEPSICO, INC., aka PEPSI, PEPSI COLA BOTTLING COMPANY, and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY,

FILED IN MY OFFICE WAYNE COUNTY CLERK 9/30/2016 12:58:45 PM CATHY M. GARRETT

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C. By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175) Attorneys for Plaintiff 33900 Schoolcraft Livonia, MI 48150 (734) 261-2400

There is no civil action between these parties arising out of the same transaction or occurrences alleged in this Complaint pending in this Court, nor has any such action been assigned to a Judge.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys, CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, specifically by JAMES R. ACHO, and hereby complains against the Defendants, stating more fully as follows:

PARTIES, VENUE AND JURISDICTION

Plaintiff, Joe C. Thomas, is an individual residing in the City of Detroit,
 County of Wayne, State of Michigan.

- 2. Defendant, Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi"), is an international bottling conglomerate, with offices and plants in the State of Michigan, specifically in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 3. That all transactions or occurrences herein occurred in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 4. Defendant Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi") is an employer within the meaning of the Michigan Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act (MPWDA), MCL 37.1101 and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), 29 CFP.1630-1641, and the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 29 USC §2601.
 - 5. That the amount in controversy exceeds \$25,000.00.
 - 6. That venue and jurisdiction are otherwise proper in this Court.

COMMON ALLEGATIONS

- 7. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 6 above, as though fully re-written herein.
 - 8. Defendant first employed Plaintiff on February 10, 2015.
- 9. Prior to his employment with Defendant Pepsi, PlaIntiff Thomas spent several years in the tool and die industry, where he developed a good reputation for having a strong work ethic.
- 10. Plaintiff was hired on February 10, 2015 as a "Batcher" at \$18.22 an hour plus comprehensive medical benefits.
- 11. Plaintiff Thomas did not receive a 30, 60 or 90 day review and did not receive a written annual personnel review for 2015.

- 12. Plaintiff did, however, receive verbal reviews, and was repeatedly told he was "doing a great job" by his supervisors, specifically Senior Batcher Kevin Gilhooly and Quality Control Supervisor Frank Toprowski.
- 13. That in the fall of 2015, Defendant Pepsi Implemented a new batch verification system or policy.
- 14. The new batch verification policy was flawed and would lead to batcher errors.
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 Thomas and his colleagues, because the errors were not due to the performance of
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 - 20. As a result, Plaintiff Thomas refused to sign all three of the write-ups.
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- Plaintiff immediately filed the necessary paperwork for FMLA and short term disability leave (STD).
- 25. Plaintiff was determined to "have a determinable physical or mental characteristic" described by the ADA and MPWDA, specifically by MCL 37.1103(d), in that Plaintiff has a disability as defined by that section, and the Defendant employer was made aware of this.
- 26. After Plaintiff Thomas' third write-up, Plaintiff Thomas emailed Production Manager Rachael Green and complained about the verification policy and that Plaintiff felt he was being harassed by Supervisor Marvin Hendricks.
- 27. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas called the Pepsi employee hotline because after multiple calls to the Human Resources Department and not receiving a return call, Plaintiff Thomas knew of no other way to complain of not just the faulty batch verification system, but the abusive treatment he was receiving.
- 28. It was clear that Pepsi received Plaintiff Thomas' complaints, because Supervisor Frank Toprowski contacted Plaintiff Thomas and assured him the batch verification system was going to be tweaked, and that Plaintiff Thomas would have no future issues with his employment, and that Defendant Pepsi expected Plaintiff Thomas to remain in an employee for many years to come.

- 29. Plaintiff Thomas was never late and never tardy and was always reliable as an employee. On days where he would take a personal day, he followed all appropriate protocol. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas always got along with fellow employees, and was well liked for his cheerful demeanor and consistent work ethic.
- 30. Plaintiff Thomas returned from his STD and FMLA leave on or about August 1, 2016. On the day Plaintiff Thomas returned, Plaintiff went through the morning shift huddle and all of Plaintiff's co-workers welcomed him back and indicated they were happy to see him.
 - 31. After an hour, Plaintiff Thomas was pulled out of his shift and terminated.
- 32. Plaintiff was told he was being terminated for a fourth write-up, for something that had happened months prior.
- 33. This was transparent and vindictive in nature, and Defendant's motives were quite clear. Defendant terminated Plaintiff in retallation for taking FMLA and STD as well as complaining to management about the faulty batch verification system.
- 34. That Defendant's termination of Piaintiff was unlawful and constitutes disability discrimination and retaliation.
- 35. That as a result of Defendant's unlawful acts, Plaintiff Thomas has suffered economic damages including lost wages, back pay, future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further Plaintiff was forced to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay and all other fringe benefits. Plaintiff has also suffered non-economic damages, including mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

<u>COUNT I</u>

<u>DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF</u> <u>THE MICHIGAN PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CIVIL RIGHTS ACT</u>

- 36. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 35 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 37. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further. Plaintiff was protected by the ADA, and MPWDA.
- 38. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2016.
- 39. The MPWDA and ADA provide that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 40. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by the MPWDA.
- 41. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.
- 42. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant

had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2016.

- 43. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant representatives.
- 44. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 45. That Defendant's actions against the PlaIntiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff likewise seeks recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

COUNT II

DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF THE FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

- 46. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 45 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 47. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further, Plaintiff was protected by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 48. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 49. The FMLA provides that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 50. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 51. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.

- 52. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 53. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant's representatives.
- 54. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 55. That Defendant's actions against the Plaintiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff likewise seeks

recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

VERIFIED STATEMENT:

I verify that all the allegations in this Complaint are true to the best of my recollection.

JOE C. THOMAS

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS,

Plaintiff

٧

Case No.

CD

PEPSICO, INC., and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY.

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C. By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)

Attorneys for Plaintiff 33900 Schoolcraft Livonia, MI 48150 (734) 261-2400

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys, CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C., by JAMES R. ACHO, and demands a jury trial in the above-entitled action.

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016

STATE OF MICHIGAN THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT WAYNE COUNTY

SUMMONS AND COMPLAINT

CASE NO. 16-012519-CD Hon, Potricio Perez Fresard

Woodward Ave., Detroit MI 48226					
				Court Telephone 1	No. 313 -224- 51
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ames R. Acho (P 62175)	•				
3900 Schoolcraft	•		"		
ivonia, MI 48150					
734) 261-2400	·	J			.
UMMONS NOTICE TO TH	E DEFENDANT: In th	ne name of the peop	le of the State of Michig	an you are notified:	
You are being sued.	•	•			
YOU HAVE 21 DAYS after receiv	ing this summons to file a v	written answer witl	the court and serve a	copy on the other party	
or take other lawful action with th					
If you do not answer or take other a	action within the time allow	ed, judgment may b	e entered against you fo	r the relief demanded in the c	omplaint.
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	12/30/2016		& Serve Tyler	•	
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September 30, 2016

Signature of attorney/plaintiff

If you require special accommodations to use the court because of a disability or if you require a foreign language interpreter to help you fully participate in court proceedings, please contact the court immediately to make arrangements.



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Signature

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS.

ďb

Plaintiff

Case No. HON.

CD

16-012519-CD

PEPSICO, INC., aka PEPSI, PEPSI COLA BOTTLING COMPANY, and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY, FILED IN MY OFFICE WAYNE COUNTY CLERK 9/30/2016 12:58:45 PM CATHY M. GARRETT

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)

Attorneys for Plaintiff 33900 Schoolcraft

Livonia, MI-48150 (734) 261-2400

There is no civil action between these parties arising out of the same transaction or occurrences alleged in this Complaint pending in this Court, nor has any such action been assigned to a Judge.

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys, CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, specifically by JAMES R. ACHO, and hereby complains against the Defendants, stating more fully as follows:

PARTIES, VENUE AND JURISDICTION

Plaintiff, Joe C. Thomas, is an individual residing in the City of Detroit,
 County of Wayne, State of Michigan.

- 2. Defendant, Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi"), is an international bottling conglomerate, with offices and plants in the State of Michigan, specifically in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 3. That all transactions or occurrences herein occurred in the City of Detroit, County of Wayne, State of Michigan.
- 4. Defendant Pepsico, Inc. ("Pepsi") is an employer within the meaning of the Michigan Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act (MPWDA), MCL 37.1101 and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), 29 CFP.1630-1641, and the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 29 USC §2601.
 - 5. That the amount in controversy exceeds \$25,000.00.
 - 6. That venue and jurisdiction are otherwise proper in this Court.

COMMON ALLEGATIONS

- 7. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 6 above, as though fully re-written herein.
 - 8. Defendant first employed Plaintiff on February 10, 2015.
- 9. Prior to his employment with Defendant Pepsi, Plaintiff Thomas spent several years in the tool and die industry, where he developed a good reputation for having a strong work ethic.
- 10. Plaintiff was hired on February 10, 2015 as a "Batcher" at \$18.22 an hour plus comprehensive medical benefits.
- 11. Plaintiff Thomas did not receive a 30, 60 or 90 day review and dld not receive a written annual personnel review for 2015.

- 12. Plaintiff did, however, receive verbal reviews, and was repeatedly told he was "doing a great job" by his supervisors, specifically Senior Batcher Kevin Gilhooly and Quality Control Supervisor Frank Toprowski.
- 13. That in the fall of 2015, Defendant Pepsi implemented a new batch verification system or policy.
- 14. The new batch verification policy was flawed and would lead to batcher errors.
- 15. Plaintiff Thomas, a quiet and non-confrontational individual, initially said nothing to his supervisors, even though it was clear to everyone that the batch verification system was faulty.
 - 16. On October 22, 2015, Plaintiff was written up for an error in batching.
- 17. On January 29, 2016, Plaintiff received a second write-up for a similar error.
- 18. On March 7, 2016, Plaintiff Thomas received a third write-up, for yet again another batching error.
- 19. All three write-ups Plaintiff received were illegitimate in the eyes of Plaintiff
 Thomas and his colleagues, because the errors were not due to the performance of
 Plaintiff Thomas, but because the batch verification system itself was flawed.
 - 20. As a result, Plaintiff Thomas refused to sign all three of the write-ups.
- 21. As a result of the stress placed upon him by having to deal with a faulty batch verification system as a batcher, Plaintiff Thomas began to suffer health challenges.

- 22. Plaintiff Thomas suffered a nervous breakdown in May, 2016, and was taken by ambulance to the hospital.
- 23. Plaintiff Thomas was diagnosed with anxiety disorder and his physician placed Plaintiff on leave.
- 24. Plaintiff immediately filed the necessary paperwork for FMLA and short term disability leave (STD).
- 25. Plaintiff was determined to "have a determinable physical or mental characteristic" described by the ADA and MPWDA, specifically by MCL 37.1103(d), in that Plaintiff has a disability as defined by that section, and the Defendant employer was made aware of this.
- 26. After Plaintiff Thomas' third write-up, Plaintiff Thomas emailed Production Manager Rachael Green and complained about the verification policy and that Plaintiff felt he was being harassed by Supervisor Marvin Hendricks.
- 27. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas called the Pepsi employee hotline because after multiple calls to the Human Resources Department and not receiving a return call, Plaintiff Thomas knew of no other way to complain of not just the faulty batch verification system, but the abusive treatment he was receiving.
- 28. It was clear that Pepsi received Plaintiff Thomas' complaints, because Supervisor Frank Toprowski contacted Plaintiff Thomas and assured him the batch verification system was going to be tweaked, and that Plaintiff Thomas would have no future issues with his employment, and that Defendant Pepsi expected Plaintiff Thomas to remain In an employee for many years to come.

- 29. Plaintiff Thomas was never late and never tardy and was always reliable as an employee. On days where he would take a personal day, he followed all appropriate protocol. In addition, Plaintiff Thomas always got along with fellow employees, and was well liked for his cheerful demeanor and consistent work ethic.
- 30. Plaintiff Thomas returned from his STD and FMLA leave on or about August 1, 2016. On the day Plaintiff Thomas returned, Plaintiff went through the morning shift huddle and all of Plaintiff's co-workers welcomed him back and indicated they were happy to see him.
 - 31. After an hour, Plaintiff Thomas was pulled out of his shift and terminated.
- 32. Plaintiff was told he was being terminated for a fourth write-up, for something that had happened months prior.
- 33. This was transparent and vindictive in nature, and Defendant's motives were quite clear. Defendant terminated Plaintiff in retaliation for taking FMLA and STD as well-as complaining to management about the faulty batch verification system.
- 34. That Defendant's termination of Plaintiff was unlawful and constitutes disability discrimination and retaliation.
- 35. That as a result of Defendant's unlawful acts, Plaintiff Thomas has suffered economic damages including lost wages, back pay, future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further Plaintiff was forced to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay and all other fringe benefits. Plaintiff has also suffered non-economic damages, including mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

COUNT I

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF THE MICHIGAN PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

- 36. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 35 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 37. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further, Plaintiff was protected by the ADA, and MPWDA.
- 38. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff In August, 2016.
- 39. The MPWDA and ADA provide that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retallate against an individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 40. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by the MPWDA.
- 41. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.
- 42. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant

had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2016.

- 43. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant representatives.
- 44. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 45. That Defendant's actions against the Plaintiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff Ilkewise seeks recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

COUNT II

DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF THE FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

- 46. Plaintiff hereby incorporates paragraphs 1 through 45 above, as though fully re-written herein.
- 47. That as previously stated, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class by virtue of his medical condition, and that Defendant was well aware of Plaintiff's medical condition, and that further, Plaintiff was protected by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 48. That Plaintiff's medical condition and the fact Plaintiff took leave to treat said medical condition was clearly a factor in his termination by the Defendant, as well as Defendant's failure to re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 49. The FMLA provides that an employer shall not discharge or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against an Individual with respect to compensation or the terms, conditions or privileges of employment because of a disability.
- 50. That Defendant did affect the terms and conditions of Plaintiff's employment by terminating Plaintiff's employment and subsequently refusing to re-hire him due to his disability as defined by §2615 of the Family & Medical Leave Act, otherwise found at 29 USC §2601 et. seq.
- 51. The fact that Plaintiff suffered a nervous breakdown on the job site and was forced to take leave to recuperate from same did not mean Plaintiff deserved to be terminated. In fact, the opposite was in fact true.

- 52. That Plaintiff's performance, aside from situations involving the faulty batch verification system, was always and stellar and consistent. As such, Defendant had no legitimate business reason that it would terminate and not re-hire Plaintiff in August, 2015.
- 53. That in fact Defendant did recognize Plaintiff's disability at the time he was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and subsequently spoke to the Defendant's representatives.
- 54. That despite the foregoing, Defendant retaliated against Plaintiff Thomas and terminated his employment on the very day he returned to work, providing a transparent and phony explanation for the termination.
- 55. That Defendant's actions against the Plaintiff are egregious and solely based on his medical condition and the fact that he took leave for same, and proximately caused Plaintiff Thomas to suffer back pay and future pay, future raises and all other benefits provided, and further has forced Plaintiff to suffer a loss of health benefits, vacation pay, holiday pay, and has also caused the Plaintiff to suffer mental anguish, anxiety, as well as humiliation and embarrassment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, hereby requests that this Honorable Court grant him an award in an amount in excess of \$25,000.00 to which this Court believes Plaintiff Thomas is entitled, to fully compensate him for his economic and non-economic damages, which he has sustained as a direct and proximate result of Defendant's unlawful retaliation and termination of Plaintiff. Plaintiff likewise seeks

recovery for his actual attorney's fees and costs and whatever other equitable relief this Honorable Court deems just.

VERIFIED STATEMENT:

I verify that all the allegations in this Complaint are true to the best of my recollection.

JOE C. THOMAS

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
<u>JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)</u>
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016

STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF WAYNE

JOE C. THOMAS,

Plaintiff

Case No. HON. CD

PEPSICO, INC., and PEPSI BEVERAGES COMPANY,

Defendants

CUMMINGS, MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C. By: JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)

Attorneys for Plaintiff 33900 Schoolcraft Livonia, MI 48150 (734) 261-2400

DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, JOE C. THOMAS, by and through his attorneys, CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C., by JAMES R. ACHO, and demands a jury trial in the above-entitled action.

Respectfully submitted,

CUMMINGS, McCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.

By: <u>/s/ James R. Acho</u>
JAMES R. ACHO (P 62175)
33900 Schoolcraft
Livonia Michigan 48150
(734) 261-2400

Dated: September 29, 2016